



Livable Streets Update (FIVE IN FIVE)



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CITY TO SAVE \$27.2 MILLION ON FINANCING NEW DOWNTOWN CONVENTION CENTER

The City of Raleigh will save approximately \$27.2 million in interest payments on financing a new convention center downtown.

The City executed a forward starting swap transaction that took advantage of historically low interest rates. With the transaction, the City locked into an interest rate of 4.76 percent over 30 years on the certificates of participation that are being used to finance the convention center. The financing model originally used for the convention center was based on a 5.25 percent fixed rate. With the new rate of 4.76 percent, the City is saving about 50 basis points per year on interest payments.

The City Council had authorized City Manager Russell Allen and the City's Chief Financial Officer Perry James to execute the forward swap if it was beneficial to the City. The transaction falls within guidelines of an interest rate exchange agreement adopted by the City Council on April 6. The policy contains guidelines the City will follow to govern the use and management of interest rate exchange agreements that pertain to City debt issues.

The new convention center and a four-star Marriott hotel will be built on the south end of downtown. Construction is scheduled to begin in 2005 with completion in 2007.



THE FIVE IN FIVE WORK PLAN

Fayetteville Street Renaissance

Goal: Reinvigorate Fayetteville Street as the heart of Raleigh, the ceremonial corridor and the premier Downtown address for office, events and cultural activity. The top action items:

- Make active uses mandatory for ground floors fronting Fayetteville Street and provide incentives to encourage them.
- Fill in development gaps.
- Open available blocks to vehicular activity; in phases, beginning with the 200 and 300 blocks.
- Re-establish the capitol vista - Develop outdoor festival and performance space.

Convention Center

Goal: Develop and market competitive facilities to attract more national conventions and trade shows, and improve the business environment for hotels, restaurants and other visitor serving facilities. The top action items:

- Get new downtown convention center and convention center hotel adopted and funded.
- Solve lobby access.
- Suggest future expansion to south.
- Investigate mixed-use and roof-top uses.
- Develop strategy for active edge on Cabarrus Street.

CITY TO DRAFT CONCEPTUAL PLAN FOR CONVENTION CENTER AREA

The City of Raleigh will issue a request-for-proposals (RFPs) for a planning/design consultant and a development consultant to assist with drawing up a conceptual plan for redeveloping the south end of downtown Raleigh. The City Council voted April 20 to authorize the City administration to issue the RFPs.

In addition to drafting a redevelopment scheme, the consultants will work with the City on identifying development projects for the southern end of Fayetteville Street that meet goals and objectives of the City's "Livable Streets" Downtown Plan. The City expects to select the consultants next month. Eventually, the City plans to enter into development agreements with one or more developers to redevelop the area.

New development projects are already under way in parts of downtown near the Raleigh Convention and Conference Center and the BTI Center for the Performing Arts. These include construction of Progress Energy's office tower and mixed-use project, and redevelopment of the former Hudson Belk building. Furthermore the City's "Livable Streets" Plan is designed to reinvigorate downtown, and the City and



County are constructing a new convention center and 400-room, four-star Marriott hotel. These projects are expected to stimulate additional public and private redevelopment efforts on downtown's southern end.

CITY SET TO REPLACE STREET TREES DOWNTOWN

Looking to improve the beauty of downtown Raleigh, the City of Raleigh's Urban Forestry Division is replacing several trees in the downtown area. According to City of Raleigh Urban Forester Alex Johnson, 28 honey locusts are being removed and will be replaced with Chinese Lacebark Elms.

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Improve the Pedestrian Environment

Goal: Create an attractive, well lit, safe environment that links office and residential areas to amenities such as restaurants, museums and arts venues. Make downtown accessible to all. The top action items:

- Require pedestrian oriented ground level uses with high level of detail, i.e. doorways, windows, awnings and overhangs, along the sidewalk edge in downtown.
- Connect existing and emerging neighborhoods to Fayetteville Street.
- Further study converting east / west one-way streets to two-way.
- Investigate federal funding sources.
- Connect TTA Regional Rail station area with pedestrian linkages.

Regulatory Reform

Goal: Improve business environment by removing regulatory impediments; make it at least as easy to do business downtown as any place else in the region; include incentives in regulations. The top action items:

- Centralize approvals: Establish a downtown team within the city to respond to major project proposals and construction quickly. Develop a parallel strategy for small/mid-sized projects.
- Centralize the approvals process by creating a team within the city to respond to development proposals.
- Provide development incentives for vacant buildings and properties.
- Address issues dealing with outdoor dining, signage and other pedestrian encroachments.

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The new trees will have a two- to three-inch caliper and will be between nine and 12-feet tall.

“Street trees have an average lifespan of about seven to 10 years,” Mr. Johnson said. “The ones we are taking out are at the end of their lifespan.”

Mr. Johnson added that the honey locusts struggled in the downtown area due to the poor growing conditions an urban setting provides. The elms have a proven track record of being able to withstand the limited soil and water conditions that a street tree must endure.

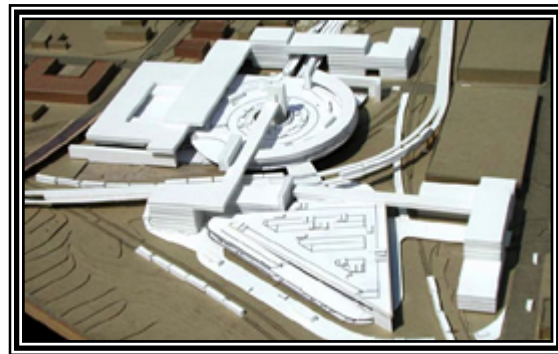
“When these trees mature, they will provide a more unifying effect downtown,” he said. “You will have an area that has a greater sense of cohesion and should look a lot nicer.”

RALEIGH’S FIRST TRANSIT-ORIENTED TOWER IS APPROVED

A 14-story mixed-use tower in downtown Raleigh was unanimously approved by the City Council on April 20.

The building will be constructed on 1.08 acres on the southeast intersection of West Jones and North Harrington streets. Structures currently on the site will be demolished to accommodate the project. The 294,873-square-foot tower will have 68,172 square feet of office space, 61 condominiums covering a total of 76,403 square feet, 1,031 square feet for a bank, a 6,429-square-foot multi-purpose room, and 391 parking spaces. Twenty of the parking spaces will be surface parking; the rest will be in a parking garage.

The tower project is the type of quality transit-oriented and pedestrian-friendly mixed-use development that the City wants for areas near commuter rail stations planned for Raleigh. On April 6, the City Council unanimously adopted transit-oriented development overlay district guidelines and Comprehensive (continued on page 4)



Downtown Management

Goal: Take a "one-stop shopping" approach to the management and marketing of downtown. The top action items:

- Develop a comprehensive Downtown marketing program, including an expanded website. It should be developed and coordinated with all downtown resources to promote events and attractions. Maximize the capitol status.
- Create a downtown development corporation.
- Make Downtown Raleigh Alliance the organization responsible for bringing all parties to the table to oversee implementation of the vision.
- Explore development incentives and options similar to tax increment financing.



Livable Streets

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Plan amendments to guide future development around the rail stations.

The Triangle Transit Authority's planned regional rail system will run between Raleigh and Durham via Cary and Research Triangle Park. Phase I construction includes five station locations in west Raleigh and downtown, with rail service to begin in 2007. The tower approved by the council is less than two blocks from one of the planned rail stations.

DOWNTOWN REGULATORY REFORM HIGH PRIORITY TO AID DEVELOPMENT

One of the five goals in the Raleigh City Council's approved Livable Streets plan is to improve the business environment by removing regulatory impediments and make it at least as easy to do business downtown as any place else in the region.

City Manager J. Russell Allen established two City staff teams to work on downtown development issues. The downtown development team, is made up of the city manager and a number of City department directors that have downtown program responsibilities within their departments. The City staff downtown team consists of 25 City staff members who are designated by their department to be sure that downtown issues are being appropriately addressed.

The following action items have been established as priorities to improve the downtown business climate and improve economic development.

Pedestrian Environment/Streetscape Action Items

1. Pedestrian plan (Planning, Transportation)
2. Downtown sidewalks improvements (Engineering, Transportation)
3. Fayetteville, Hargett, Martin, and Davie Street improvements (Planning-Urban Design Center, Engineering, Transportation)

STATUS

- Proposal for pedestrian plan money allocations in 2005-2006 budget
- Progress Energy has surveyed downtown street lights and is working on repairs
- Fayetteville Street south end master planning process will include pedestrian improvements
- Hargett / Martin Street improvements include adding four feet to the sidewalk width in the 000 blocks on one side (continued on page 5)

Contacts

City of Raleigh
Planning Department
George Chapman, Director
(919) 890-3125
george.chapman
@ci.raleigh.nc.us

Urban Design Center
133 Fayetteville Street Mall
Dan Douglas
(919) 807-8441
Daniel.douglas@ci.raleigh.nc.us

Raleigh Convention and
Conference Center
500 Fayetteville Street Mall
(919) 831-6011
Roger Krupa, Director
roger@raleighconvention.com

Fayetteville Street Mall
Renaissance
City of Raleigh
Public Works Department
Dean Fox
(919) 890-3030
dean.fox @ci.raleigh.nc.us

City of Raleigh
Public Works Department
Carl Dawson, Director
(919) 890-3030
carl.dawson@ci.raleigh.nc.us

Regulatory Reform
City Of Raleigh
City Attorney
Thomas McCormick, Jr.
(919) 890-3060
Tom.McCormick@ci.raleigh.nc.us

Newsletter &
Communications
City of Raleigh
Public Affairs Department
Jayne Kirkpatrick, Director
(919) 890-3100
jayne.kirkpatrick@ci.raleigh.nc.us

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Encroachments/ Sidewalk & Street Events and Activities Action Items

- a. Improve tracking of applications, record of decisions, availability of information for applicants.
 - b. Expedite outdoor dining approval through clearer delineation of guidelines.
 - c. Determine appropriate delineation for encroachments that do and do not need to go to the City Council.
 - d. Work with Cooper Carry to draft urban design standards.
- a. Establish vendor locations and work on a new permit/ordinance.
 - b. Continue exploring expedited approval process.
This may result in removing the City Council approval if deemed appropriate. This approval process might be incorporated into other permits split between permanent/non permanent.
 - c. Work with Cooper Carry to begin implementation of urban design standards
 - d. Work with City Attorney's Office to update ordinances regarding outdoor uses.

STATUS

- Administration of the encroachment permit now moved into Zoning
- New Urban Design Manual is under development and being reviewed by staff and the Downtown Raleigh Alliance. City Council will hold a public hearing on the proposal May 18 at 6:30 p.m.
- The Urban Design Manual will set the standards for administrative approval of encroachment permits

Development Regulations & Process Issues

1. New guidelines to streamline approval processes by the city council and staff - limit public hearing to new projects over 10,000 square feet threshold
2. Establish a single downtown district that consolidates the variety of Downtown Overlay Districts and incorporates the new Urban Design Guidelines
3. The Facade Grant and Design Assistance Program is under review

STATUS

- The proposal which incorporates both of these items has been presented to the City Manager's Downtown Action Group and the Downtown Development Advisory Group
- Will make a presentation to the Downtown Raleigh Alliance
- Comments received will be incorporated and proposal will be submitted it to City Council later this year
- An expanded façade and design assistance program proposal will be presented to the council on May 4th

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Ending Homelessness

Ken Maness
(919) 890-3655
ken.maness@ci.raleigh.nc.us

Wake County

David Cooke, County Manager
(919) 856-6160
dcooke@co.wake.nc.us

The Downtown Raleigh Alliance

120 S. Wilmington St.,
Suite 103
Raleigh, NC 27601
(919) 832-1231
Margaret Mullen,
President & CEO
margaretmullen@bellsouth.net

Greater Raleigh Chamber of Commerce

800 S. Salisbury Street
(919) 664-7000
Harvey Schmitt,
President & CEO
hschmitt@the-chamber.org

Greater Raleigh Convention & Visitors Bureau

421 Fayetteville Street Mall,
Suite 1505
Raleigh, NC 27601
(919) 834-5900 or
(800) 849-8499
David L. Heinl, CDME
President and CEO
dheinl@raleighcvb.org

Web links

City of Raleigh
www.raleigh-nc.org

Wake County
www.wakegov.com

Downtown Raleigh Alliance
www.downtownraleigh.org

Greater Raleigh Chamber of Commerce
www.raleighchamber.org

Greater Raleigh Convention & Visitors Bureau
www.visitraleigh.com

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Parking

1. New Parking Task Force Group formed; meets monthly
2. Free downtown weekend and night parking on decks- Moore Square, Municipal, Wilmington, Convention Center (when no events are scheduled)
3. Parking signs, evaluate parking policies, valet parking procedures, handicapped parking permits, parking zone issues, leasing agreement for leased deck spaces
4. Create commercial loading zones between the hours of 6am-6pm
5. Eliminate current enforcement hours of 9:00am - 5:00pm, and provide enforcement from 7:00am to 7:00pm
6. Create a parking informational flyer with the parking locations, rules, and rates

STATUS

- Proposed free weekend parking program on decks- Moore Square, Municipal, Wilmington and Convention Center (only on no event days for Convention Center deck) has been implemented
- Working on free weekday night parking (after 7 pm) and sign regulation for Downtown area
- Creation of a commercial loading zone is being discussed by the Parking Advisory Committee
- Elimination of the current enforcement hours proposal is in the process of being drafted by the Public Affairs Department and the Parking Management

Transit / Regional Rail

1. Downtown West Gateway Plan - will identify new policies and programs - Transit Overlay District, Transit Station Small Area Plan, Inter-modal Transportation Facility Plan, Capital Improvement Program
2. Five Year Transit Plan items- Westside and Govt. Center Shuttle Program

STATUS

- Both the Small Area Plan and Redevelopment Plan impacting regional rail activities on the west side of downtown are underway and anticipated to be brought to City Council and Planning Commission in Summer of 2004
- A schedule, maps and text are continually updated as these plans move forward on the Planning Department Web site at: http://www.raleigh-nc.org/planning/Small_Area_Plans/Downtown_West_Gateway.htm
- A consultation with NCDOT Deputy Secretary David King has been scheduled by the Mayor for late April to develop common objectives for the pursuit of specific plans for an Intermodal center near the TTA Downtown Raleigh Station

Marketing / Management & Support

Downtown Marketing / Management & Support Team -

1. Marketing materials (regulatory brochures, events calendar)
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2. Program Events - (events on mall, gallery walk, BTI outdoor productions, Independence Day)-
3. Downtown Regulatory / Process Brochure

STATUS

- Work is currently underway to develop a marketing proposal for updating information on the Downtown action items to the public and programming a schedule of events for the Downtown area

NEW DOWNTOWN TEAMS HAVE BEEN ESTABLISHED

DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY GROUP - Downtown developers, architects, private business owners, tenants, building managers, health department, city staff

1. Meets regularly on the 4th Monday of every month
2. The group discusses potential new initiatives, changes or ways to do business in Downtown Raleigh from a regulatory, policy, process or program perspective

STATUS

- Meets regularly to alert staff on the various Downtown development issues encountered
- An assembly of observations, recommendations and actions undertaken as a result of these meetings is being compiled

DOWNTOWN OPPORTUNITIES TEAM

1. Review projects for consistency with urban design guidelines and potential development issues that may need to be addressed before planning and inspections review
2. Meetings will be scheduled for review of potential downtown development projects with staff team on a case by case basis

STATUS

- Formation of a new Downtown Opportunities Team has been approved by the City Manager and Downtown Action Group
- Sara Young (Urban Design Center) will serve as DOC (Downtown Opportunities Coordinator) to coordinate with other members of the **City Staff Downtown Team** to preview potential projects before they go to planning and inspections for submittal and formal review

Meeting	Date/Time	Purpose
Ending Homelessness 10-year Action Plan Community Forum	May 20 6:30 p.m. Millbrook United Methodist Church 1712 E. Millbrook Rd.	Focusing on issues of: Policies / Rules / Regulations, Organizational Structures, Service Provision / Providers, Transportation, Jobs / Job Finding, Training / Education, Housing, Wages / Fair Wages
Draft Urban Design Manual Public Hearing	Tuesday, May 18 6:30 p.m. City Council Chamber 222 W. Hargett St.	Joint City Council and Planning Commission hearing to receive public comment.

THE FIVE IN FIVE GOALS

1. **Complete a Fayetteville Street Renaissance** to reinvigorate the Street as the heart of Raleigh, our ceremonial corridor and the premiere address for office, events and cultural activity.



2. **Fund and build a new Convention Center & Hotel** to attract conventions and trade shows and improve the business environment for hotels, restaurants and other visitor services.

3. **Improve the pedestrian environment** making downtown accessible to everyone. Balance the needs of pedestrians against those of the car. Create an attractive,

well lit, safe environment that links office and residential uses to amenities such as restaurants, museums and other venues.

4. **Undertake regulatory reform** to improve the business climate by re-moving regulatory impediments, making it just as easy to do business downtown as any place in the region. Explore adding incentives in the regulations.

5. **Expand downtown management** to take a one stop approach to management and advocacy.